

APPENDIX B

Citizen Comments and Public Notices

**Public Comments at “Needs” Public Hearing
Monday, January 6, 2014 at 7:00 PM
Durham City Council
(Excerpted from Approved Minutes)**

SUBJECT: FY 2014-2015 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN "NEEDS" PUBLIC HEARING

To conduct a public hearing to receive comments on the FY 2014-2015 Annual Action Plan "Needs" related to community development needs.

Wilmur Conyers, with the Community Development Department, stated the purpose of this public hearing is to receive public comment on the community development needs in Durham neighborhoods as it relates to the use and receipt of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds. She stated this public hearing is a requirement for the preparation and submission of the City's 2014-2015 Annual Action Plan. Notice of this meeting was advertised in the Herald Sun and via a general list serve. She reported as a recipient of CDBG, HOME and ESG funds, the City is required to hold at least two public hearings during the development of the Annual Action Plan—one being early in the development stage of the plan. She noted the second public hearing will be held in late April. She said in addition, the City is required to publish a copy of its Draft Annual Action Plan at least 30 days prior to its submission. She stated the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has not yet announced the FY 2014 entitlement allocations and has advised grantees not to submit its consolidated plan or action plan until those allocations have been announced. At that time, grantees are to submit their final plans with the exact entitlement allocations. However, for planning purposes the City expects to receive approximately \$1,650,000 in CDBG, \$700,000 in HOME, and \$100,000 in ESG funds. She stated a summary of comments from this public hearing and written comments received from citizens during the development of the Action Plan will be incorporated into the final Plan.

Mayor Bell opened the public hearing.

Steve Hopkins made comments about the Weed and Seed strategy that was accepted and implemented in Northeast Central Durham in 1994 referencing the neighborhood meetings and accomplishments. He highlighted what the needs are for the Northeast Central Durham community: 1) jobs, protection for neighborhoods, ways to combat crime, streets and sidewalks and improving the housing stock. Also, he stated they need investment in adult human capital, self-sufficiency programs, expansion for businesses as well as team and capacity building.

Mayor Bell mentioned that Council received a copy of Steve Hopkins' handout and would assume that his handout would be a discussion at the Northeast Central Durham Subcommittee meeting.

Sharon Elliott Bynum, representing Healing with CAARE, gave an overview of the non-profit organization referencing their one-stop shop for services. She expressed a concern with the process for receiving funding. She made comments about their request for funding [\$108,000] to rehab one of their houses for four homeless female veterans, the CAC ranking of their organization and the agency recommended for funding by Community Development. She expressed concern that the agency who received funding gave back \$48,150 and that CAARE received \$28,000 for the same exact project that they applied for in 2008-09. She further noted the Executive Director passed away before receiving the funds and when she inquired about that funding she was told to wait until there is a RFP. She asked for clarity on the process and that the needs of homeless female veterans in our neighborhood is one that is inclusive.

DeWarren Langley, representing the Citizens Advisory Committee, outlined the role of the committee. He made comments about the high rental rate in Durham and spoke in support of funding for affordable housing to improve the quality of life.

Debbie White, representing CASA, spoke in support of the need for developing additional permanent supportive housing units. She made comments about the 107 people that are on the waiting list for an apartment that is affordable and referrals for community-based services. She asked Council to prioritize the CDBG and HOME funds to serve people who need housing the most, people experiencing homelessness and people with disabilities who are low income.

Victoria Peterson shared her experience with job corps and urged Council to support a residential training program for young people.

Mayor Bell closed the public hearing.

Mayor Bell requested a follow up to Ms. Bynum's concerns.

Community Development Director Reginald Johnson addressed Ms. Bynum's comments. He stated that comments raised by Ms. Bynum refer to the Continuum of Care process and staff will have to research comments made regarding the \$28,000.00. Mr. Johnson announced that the Homeless Services Advisory Committee will be voting only on the recommendation at their Wednesday meeting.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden stated concerns raised by Ms. Bynum should be investigated and expressed concerns regarding the distribution of funding.

Council Member Schewel requested an update on the CASA housing project located on Guess Road.

Community Development Director Reginald Johnson indicated that he will provide information on the CASA housing project.

Council Member Schewel made comments about the one penny for housing highlighting that the \$1 million build up can provide the kind of housing that is being talked about tonight.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden seconded by Council Member Schewel to receive comments on the FY 2014-2015 Annual Action Plan "Needs" related to community development needs was approved at 7:45 p.m. by the following vote:
Ayes: Mayor Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden and Council Members Brown, Catotti, Davis, Moffitt and Schewel. Noes: None. Absent: None.